

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, March 13, 1986

Published Since 1877

## Missionaries are optimistic as Philippines get new chief

By Marty Croll

MANILA, Philippines (BP) — Southern Baptist missionaries heard firecrackers and gun blasts late into the night Tuesday, Feb. 25, as Filipinos in Manila celebrated the rise to power of a new government promising democracy and free speech.

Missionaries are optimistic about the future of work in the Philippines, having seen no sign that Baptists will be less welcome with President Corazon Aquino than they were with former President Ferdinand E. Marcos. Marcos fled the country as a rebellion of military officers and civilians ended his 20-year rule.

During the rebellion, Southern Baptists' mission chairman in the Philippines and the four other administrative committee members went on with a scheduled meeting at their offices in Manila. In Davao City, on the island of Mindanao, a training workshop led by Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to other countries also went on as planned.

Missionaries are not anxious about being in the country, said Les Hill, the mission chairman. "Our impression is the populace as a whole leans toward the revolution," he said, about

three hours before the Philippine people heard that Marcos and 55 of his family and aides had fled from Malacanang Palace, home and office of the Philippine president.

Jan Hill recalled leading a Bible study in which business people expressed their anger, and fear, at Marcos.

"There have been a great deal of prayer meetings, both Catholic and Protestant, since the first of the year," said Les Hill. "It is valid, I think, to say what is happening may well be the answer to that kind of prayer."

The Philippines, a predominantly Roman Catholic nation of 55 million people, in recent years has been one of the countries most responsive to Southern Baptist sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ in recent years. Three Filipino Baptist conventions, with help from 163 Southern Baptist missionaries and short-term personnel, last year reported baptizing 12,452 Christians. This was the fourth-largest number of baptisms reported by missionaries in any of the 106 countries where Southern Baptists work.

"The people see this as a spiritual victory," said Les Hill. "They stopped

the tanks by standing in front of them and then asking the soldiers to climb down and pray with them. And the soldiers did. What they were saying was, 'The Bible says prayer can move mountains; well, in this case, we have seen prayer that has turned tanks.'"

During the campaign and unrest preceding the election, Baptist churches scheduled several prayer meetings, Jan Hill said. Her husband attended a prayer breakfast involving evangelical churches the day before the election. He also attended meetings among evangelical leaders who debated whether to schedule special pre-election prayer meetings at strategic points in the city, and decided against it out of concern that prayer could become subservient to politics, he said.

During the revolt itself, churches were opened for prayer meetings, and people prayed in the streets for a peaceful resolution.

"The people attribute what is going on to their Christianity," he said. "I think you'd find the Catholic and Protestant alike in their viewpoint on that here."

Marty Croll writes for the FMB.



—RNS photo

### Spring riot

Spring is usually ushered in  
By one or two or maybe three  
First-comers, such as these:  
The tiny blue field daisies,  
Or violets at the base of a tree,  
Or some robins passing through.

But not this spring! No, no!  
There're violets everywhere you  
look,  
Azaleas in full bloom,  
Jonquils nodding their pretty  
heads,  
Camellias with outstretched arms  
Holding up bright umbrellas.

These are just a few in the riot  
That's quickly becoming a  
stampede  
All racing to announce the arrival  
Of a most beautiful spring.  
And in their midst are robins, not  
a few,  
Perched in trees and in yard.

Only God could have made  
All this magnificent beauty  
And touched them with his love.  
But isn't that just like God —  
To give us more abundantly  
Than we could ever ask or think?

—Ruby Singley  
Columbia

### Thanks to Pass Road

## Sweet Home may celebrate Easter in new building

By Don McGregor

On the third Sunday of February last year the building belonging to Sweet Home Baptist Church in Gulfport, a black congregation, was completely destroyed by fire. Since that time the group of 50 to 70

has been meeting in a Masonic hall when it was not being used for other reasons.

On the fifth Sunday of this month the congregation expects to move back into a debt-free building that will have been constructed and to a great extent paid for by members of Pass Road Church in Gulfport.

The local newspaper in Gulfport printed a story of the plight of the black congregation. Members of Pass Road Church saw the article and determined to do something about it. Pass Road Pastor Edgar Jackson took the lead and found contractor Bobby Bruns would be willing to organize the work. Bruns set up four crews that he called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Each crew knew its responsibilities and has been carrying them out. In four Saturdays the Pass Road members have put down a new slab foundation, erected the walls, and put the roof on.

Skilled men headed the four crews. Jackson said that Pass Road first thought the Sweet Home needed \$1,500. The Pass Road folks soon found that the need was for a new building. A love offering at Pass Road raised \$2,600. Sweet Home had \$4,000, and the work got under way. Whatever additional finances have been needed as the work has progressed have been

provided by Pass Road members. Bruns has estimated that the completed building will be valued at \$60,000 to \$70,000.

The new building will have a new carpet, and the ceiling will be changed from a flat one to a cathedral ceiling. The work has been carried on by 25 to 35 workers per Saturday. People from outside the Pass Road membership have heard about the project and have contributed.

"This has been a real blessing between these two churches," Jackson said. He and Sweet Home Pastor Freddie Owens met recently at the church to discuss the progress. Sweet Home Assistant Pastor Fisher Bester was present also.

Since the construction began there has been a revival with both churches participating. A sign company in Gulfport has agreed to build a new sign for the church.

If all goes well, dedication services for the new building will be held March 23. Also that day Pass Road will break ground for an extension for its education building.

The new building will seat about 250, Jackson said. He is looking forward to preaching the dedicatory message a week before the building goes into use.

The Sweet Home members are looking forward to Easter Sunday services in a new building.



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

Inside the building at Sweet Home Church, Gulfport, Pastor Freddie Owens, left; Edgar Jackson, center, pastor of Pass Road Church, Gulfport; and Fisher Bester, assistant pastor of Sweet

Home Church, survey the work that has been accomplished by members of Pass Road Church.



# Editorials..... by don mcgregor

## The result of integration?

The short statement that precedes the Letters to the Editor in the Baptist Record points out that the views of the writers are not necessarily reflected in the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Because Baptists views are diverse, we run many letters which do not reflect the views of the editor.

We ran one last week with which I must express my disagreement. It was a letter favoring racial segregation.

Our policy on letters to the editor is simply that they must not attack anyone other than the editor. We also give Mississippi writers first preference when choosing letters. Very seldom are letters from Mississippi Baptist writers left out.

Only as a letter to the editor would the writer of last week's letter have been allowed to express such a viewpoint as he did. We would not have used the same material as a guest opinion. We have no way of knowing where a line should be drawn in saying a Mississippi Baptist's opinion should not be presented in a letter to the editor, but if we run a letter I also feel free to explain that I do not agree with the letter writer, if such should be the case. I do not explain my disagreement with every letter with which I do not agree. With this one, however, I must post notice of disagreement.

There will not be a great amount of space given to a refutation. The letter writer has a right to his opinion, and I will not seek to judge him in it. I seriously question, however, that integration has been a curse in Cuba, Brazil, and Latin America. He claims that it has caused disease, dependency, and deplorable conditions.

One statement will suffice. In Ethiopia there has been little integration. Yet we all know to what extent the unfortunate people of Ethiopia have been dependent on the rest of the world and what deplorable conditions the people there have suffered through.

It was not the result of integration. I have been to Latin America, and I found some of the nicest people I have met. I did not find deplorable conditions, though I am sure I didn't see everything there was to see. I was visiting people in lower-class circumstances, however; not government officials nor the rich.

And who's going to declare that the

problems that beset South Africa at this time are the result of integration?

We know we have not become what we should be in race relations. Very likely, we don't even know what it is we should be in race relations. We must know that the details of this letter will not help us find the way.

And not everyone in the world would point to the United States as being the best example among nations as providing "pride, promise, and prosperity."

I have been assured that the letter represents the writer's sincere viewpoint. He is entitled to that. I must disagree, however.

## Story omitted

It's nice to find out that people are reading the Baptist Record, and we offer our sincere thanks to those who read the editorials last week and our sincere apology to those who looked for the Southern Baptist Peace Committee story that was mentioned and couldn't find it. The fact is, it wasn't there.

The Peace Committee story, addressing the diversity among

Southern Baptists, was supposed to have been in last week's issue along with the editorial. In the confusion that sometimes accompanies publishing a newspaper, it didn't make it.

That Peace Committee story is in this week's issue along with other peace committee stories. There have been several lately.

## Sincere condolences

The shocking kidnapping and murder of a Mississippi teenager brought sadness to the entire state. The young lady, Shondra May, was a Baptist and evidently a faithful member of her church, Calvary in Scott County. She seemed to have been well known and highly regarded by the neighbors who lived near her.

To that Baptist family, whose great loss has been called to the attention

of all of us throughout the state, we offer our sincere condolences.

Only the Lord himself is able to supply the strength and comfort that is vitally needed at such times as this. Yet he is ever present and ever faithful to take care of every need that we have, including the way of approaching such tragedies as they happen in the lives of many of us.

## Guest opinion . . .

## A heritage of prayer for revival

By Charles W. Deweese

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Robert L. Hamblin, vice-president for evangelism for the Home Mission Board, SBC, has called Southern Baptists to a concert of prayer in behalf of simultaneous revivals in the spring of 1986. "Good News America, God Loves You" is the theme of the revivals.

Prayer for evangelism and revivalism has been central to the heritage of Southern Baptists. Resolutions, writings, and special emphases and events illustrate this claim.

The 1937 SBC affirmed that "all spiritual awakenings come as a result of earnest, fervent, believing prayer" and resolved to "endorse a Convention-wide prayer covenant" so that "Christ's people shall be so filled with the Holy Spirit that a worldwide revival shall be the result."

The 1970 SBC adopted a resolution "On Prayer and Evangelism" which

asked churches to observe a 24-hour day of prayer on July 19 "in the interest of revival in our nation." The resolution also requested SBC officers to ask the Baptist World Alliance meeting in Tokyo, Japan, in July "to set aside a prayer time on July 18 for worldwide revival."

C. E. Autrey, noted professor of evangelism, wrote Basic Evangelism (1959). This textbook viewed prayer as essential to revivalistic efforts. Helpful preparation for revival, he concluded, could include personal prayer, neighborhood prayer meetings, all-day prayer meetings of the church, special prayer times during the revival, and even an all-night prayer meeting in the middle of a revival.

Evangelistic crusades often have led Southern Baptists to prayer. The Crusade of the Americas, an evangelistic crusade in 1968-1969 in-

volving 20 million Baptists in North, South, and Central America, resulted in important prayer developments. The BWA designated the second Sunday of each year as worldwide days of prayer for the crusade. Woman's Missionary Union, with assistance from the SBC mission boards, organized PACT. This international prayer plan linked individuals, families, churches, and other groups in intercession for the crusade. PACT promotion resulted in requests for prayer partners from 49 states and 29 countries.

Within the past few years, the Evangelism Section of the Home Mission Board, SBC, has made major strides in encouraging prayer for revivals and evangelism. These have included the formation of a program entitled "Spiritual Awakening," the creation of a staff position entitled "special assistant in spiritual awakening," the coordination of National Con-

particularly a revival meeting. There are so many avenues of promotion that this would not be the proper forum for their discussion, but the communities where revivals are to be held need to know about them.

We must put everything that we have into these evangelistic crusades. The fact that the rate of baptisms is down is not relevant to the needs that we face in these crusades. The baptism rate decline is a problem of the past that needs correcting, but the need of the simultaneous crusades is to win people to Christ. Regardless of the past, this is our primary objective right now.

Let us not lose sight of it, and let us not fail to accomplish it.

ferences on Prayer for Spiritual Awakening, a "Prayer for Spiritual Awakening Seminar," and the film The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Awakening.

The evidence is in; and much more could be produced. Southern Baptist history is filled with pleas for prayer for evangelism. Robert Hamblin's call for a concert of prayer in behalf of "Good News America" stands in line with noteworthy traditions of similar calls which have led to major spiritual awakenings in Baptist life.

The 1963 Baptist Faith and Message Statement of Southern Baptists says, "It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ." One of these methods is prayer.

Charles Deweese is on the staff of the SBC Historical Commission.

### The Baptist Record

(ISSN-0005-5778)

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Subscription \$7.35 a year payable in advance.

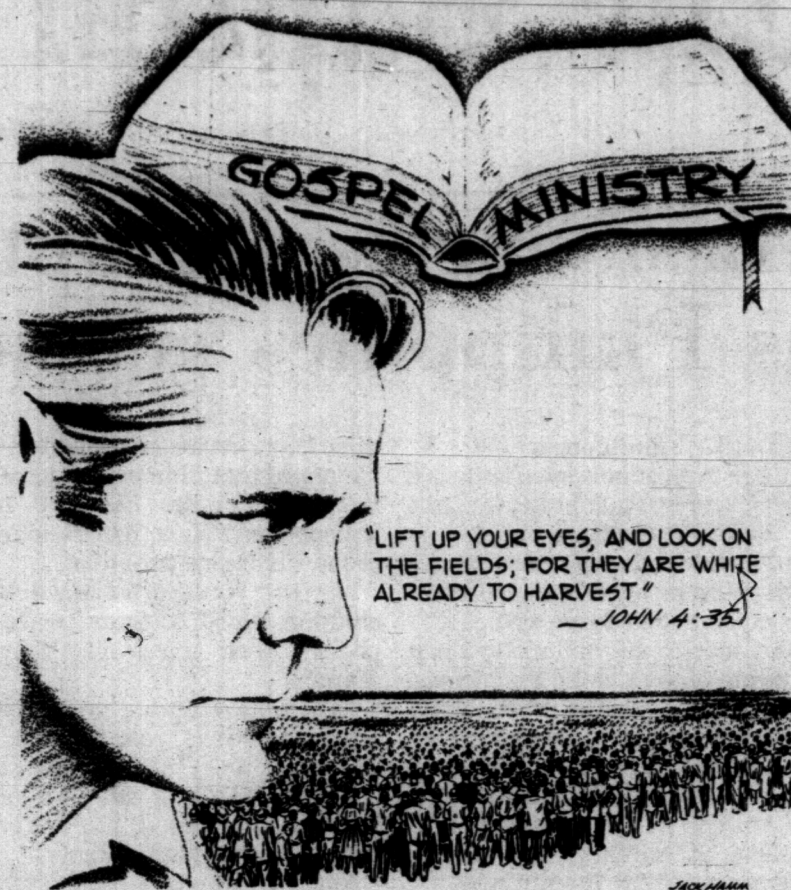
Published weekly except week of July 4 and Christmas.

Second Class Postage paid at Jackson, Mississippi.

The Baptist Record is a member of the Southern Baptist Press Association.

Volume 110 Number 6

"Then said I, Here am I; send me." — Isa. 6:8

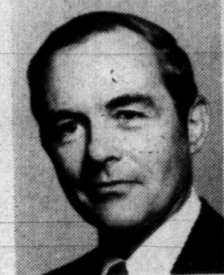


## Good News America



# Student leaders will train at Gulfshore

The annual Mississippi Baptist Student Union's Leadership Training Conference is set for March 21-23 at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Pass Christian.

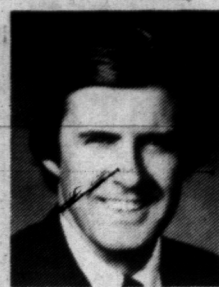


Beckett of the 1986 student missionaries, and a keynote address by Eddie Cooper, pastor of First Church, Oxford. Ron

Kurtz, minister of youth at First Church, Katy, Tex., will be music leader for the weekend.

Charles Beckett is assistant in the office of human resources for the Foreign Mission Board. He will be delivering the commissioning message to the student missionaries.

Other platform speakers include a testimony by Bill Boetler, a Jackson dentist; Art Herron, consultant with National Student Ministries at the Sunday School Board; Scott Valentine, outgoing BSU president and a student at Mississippi State; and a testimony by Mike Franklin of Mississippi State. A dramatic presen-



Cooper



Kurtz

tation will be given by the BSU Players of MUW.

Special music will include presentations by The Fishermen of MSU; John Herring of MC; Priority of MC; and Temple Stewart of Ole Miss.

Topics for special interest seminars include "Attitudes That Make Us and Attitudes That Break Us," "Finding My Place in the Local Church," Creativity," "Building and Maintaining a Healthy Self-Image," "After Graduation —WHAT NOW?" and "Exploring My Place in World Mis-

(Continued on page 4)

# Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union

## Annual Meeting

March 17-18, 1986

One hundred and seventh annual meeting  
One hundred and eighth year

## Theme: Cornerstones

Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson

Mrs. James Fancher  
President

Marjean Patterson  
Executive Director

Monday Afternoon

1:45 Prelude  
2:00 Praise Songs  
Prayer  
Greetings

Presiding, Mrs. James Fancher  
Mrs. Dot Pray

Mrs. Doris Murphy  
Jim Hurt

Waudine Storey  
Mrs. Cissa Richardson  
Bobbie Sorrell

ANNIE AND WE

Business  
Song

NEEDS IN MISSISSIPPI

Solo

HUNGER IN AMERICA?

Prayer

Postlude

Frank Gunn

Mrs. Linda Johnson  
Nathan Porter

Mrs. Jean Benton

Mrs. Pray

Monday Night

6:45 Prelude

7:00 Praise Songs

Prayer

ANNIE AND HOME MISSIONS

Election of Officers

WHAT ACTEENS MEANS TO ME

Solo

Offertory Prayer

Solo

MY MISSION IN LOUISVILLE

Special Music

Mrs. Pray

Mrs. Bobbie Bruce

Miss Sorrell

Mrs. Bruce Mitchell

Holly Benzenhafer

Mrs. Juanita Schilling

Lori Brower

Mike Elliott

Sanctuary Choir, Broadmoor Baptist Church

"Come, Sing a Song"

"Battle Hymn of the Republic"

"We Will Be Your Church"

"Cornerstone"

Jimmy Hartfield

"Go With God"

Prayer

Postlude

Tuesday Morning

9:15 Prelude

9:30 Praise Songs

Prayer

OUR LEGACY FROM MISS ANNIE

Solo

MEETING HUNGER NEEDS IN AMERICA

Solo

Offertory Prayer

Offering

WORLD MISSIONS

Honoring parents of missionaries

Solo

Solo

THE STATE OF OUR UNION

Prayer

Mrs. Elizabeth Estes

Miss Sorrell

Mr. Porter

Mrs. Jane Burns

Earl Kelly

Sue Tatum

Mrs. Linda Johnson

Marjean Patterson

Ralph Davis

Tuesday Afternoon

1:15 Prelude

1:30 Praise Songs

Prayer

MISS ANNIE AND FOREIGN MISSIONS

Solo

WOMEN WORKING IN FOREIGN MISSIONS

Solo

Recognition of DISTINGUISHED churches and associations

Solo

THE CORNERSTONE OF HOME MISSIONS

Prayer

Postlude

Mrs. Stuart Calvert

Miss Sorrell

Mrs. Parkes Marler

Mrs. Rob Sugg

Mrs. Johnson

Mr. Elliott

Mrs. Lorice Creel

Mrs. Pray

# The Baptist Record

## Peace Committee adopts statement on diversity

Editor's Note: This is the Southern Baptist Peace Committee story that was mentioned in last week's editorial titled "No Smoking Gun." That editorial referred to the story; but in the confusion of putting the paper together, this story was not in the paper.

By Dan Martin

ATLANTA (BP) — A statement acknowledging theological diversity within the Southern Baptist Convention was adopted by the SBC Peace Committee Feb. 24-25.

The three paragraph statement "is an acknowledgement of the state of affairs" in the 14.4-million-member denomination, according to Peace Committee Chairman Charles Fuller, "but more importantly is a predication on which we can attempt to build relationships through which and by which we can do missions together."

Acknowledging the statement can be taken as a "preamble" to any Peace Committee report at the 1986 annual meeting of the SBC June 10-12 in Atlanta, Fuller said, "For the moment, it will be the basis on which we will seek to find ways in which we can legitimately work together."

The statement says:

"The Peace Committee has completed a preliminary investigation of the theological situation in our SBC seminaries. We have found significant theological diversity within our seminaries reflective of the theological diversity within our wider constituency. These divergencies are found among those who claim to hold a high view of Scripture and to teach in accordance with and not contrary to the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963.

"Examples of this diversity include

the following, which are intended to be illustrative but not exhaustive: (1) Some accept and affirm the direct creation and historicity of Adam and Eve while others view them instead as representative of the human race in its creation and fall. (2) Some understand the historicity of every event in Scripture as reported by the original source while others hold that the historicity can be clarified and revised by the findings of modern historical scholarship. (3) Some hold to the stated authorship of every book in the Bible while others hold that in some cases such attribution may not refer to the final author or may be pseudonymous. (4) Some hold that every miracle in the Bible is intended to be taken as an historical event while others hold that some miracles are intended to be taken as parabolic.

(Continued on page 4)

## Cleveland honors two on 35th year

First Church, Cleveland, honored two of its members on Feb. 23 with a Jimmy and Billie Breland Appreciation Day. Brother Jimmy, as he is known to most, has completed 35 years of service as the director of the Baptist Student Union at Delta State University.

During that time he has been interim pastor at First Church on two occasions. Billie, his wife of 32 years, serves as church library/media center director at the church.

Recognition was given during the morning worship service in the form of testimonials and a gift of a portable video cassette recorder. Jerry Meriman, director of the Student Work Department of the Mississippi Baptist



Pictured during Jimmy and Billie Breland Appreciation Day at First Church, Cleveland, are, from left, Brenda Breland Sims, daughter; Billie and Jimmy Breland with grandson Cliff Sims; and Cliff Breland, Jimmy's father.

(Continued on page 4)



# Peace Committee adopts statement on diversity

(Continued from page 3)

"The Peace Committee is working earnestly to find ways to build bridges between those holding divergent views so that we may all legitimately coexist and work together in harmony to accomplish our common mission. Please pray that we may find ways to use our diversity to win the greatest number to faith in Christ as Savior and Lord."

Of the statement, Fuller commented: "I don't think any informed Southern Baptist will be surprised by it. This statement has a lot of fact in it, even though we may have known it. We have put it in writing and now it becomes a basis for how we will work together in the future."

"The first two paragraphs mean little or nothing without the third, and the third statement means little without the first two. We have brought them together to describe our condition; now we can use that as a basis for how we can legitimately do mission together."

Fuller also said: "Regardless of the theological differences we have found and acknowledged to be in our seminaries, we believe the Peace Committee also has found many reasons to greatly affirm the work of our seminaries."

With adoption of the statement, Fuller said attention of the committee will now shift to political matters in the SBC. "The agenda now calls upon us to be as thorough and candid in an analysis of political activity in SBC life; the political causes underlying our conflicts should be no less considered than the theological differences have been."

Fuller said he believes the diversity statement "is an accurate statement and is in line with the assignment of the committee, which was to discover and to bring to the attention of Southern Baptists some of the causes of our controversy."

Fuller was asked if the statement would put a "smoking gun" into the hands of those who have been critical of theological education at the six SBC-supported seminaries.

"The Peace Committee does not see that as the purpose of the statement. I think we would ask the people to handle this statement with care. To mishandle it is to forfeit whatever opportunity we have to build upon it," Fuller said.

Fuller said the statement "is an accurate statement of our denominational picture. Now we have to look at it and decide how we will live together, serve together, do missions together. All of that is at stake; therefore if we mishandle it, we destroy whatever opportunity we have."

Fuller said the statement came about "laboriously," after a meeting in which the differences were discussed at length.

"I left our last meeting in Dallas in January with a positive note and an encouragement. I am leaving this

The universe would not be rich enough to buy the vote of an honest man. — St. Gregory

meeting with optimism for different reasons. We did not simply take up where we left off in Dallas. There, we believed we had turned a corner, although we had not yet experienced a breakthrough. In Dallas, we started to talk about what we could do in order to live together, yet at the same time acknowledging our diversity."

Fuller said the difference in the February and January meetings was because the five subcommittees which visited 11 national SBC agencies made reports at the February meeting.

"The reports of the visitation committees brought our diversity to the front, the reasons for our diversity, and memories of the diversity," Fuller said. "We had to put the spirit of the Dallas meeting on the back burner while we dealt with immediate reactions to the reports."

He added: "Progress began to come in the last part of the meeting. After the reports, I sensed frustration about how we could get back on track. It seems that each time we come together there is a jolt in that we seem to have to bang against each other for a while before we can really begin where we left off. That banging together has been a characteristic each time since the second meeting."

He added: "Now, I think that instead of banging against each other when we meet, we can go back to the statement and say we have accepted the fact of our diversity. Now, I think we can get on to determine what we should do from here."

In addition to adopting the diversity

statement, the committee adopted a statement calling on all Southern Baptists "as they express themselves in support of the (presidential) candidate of their choice, that they do so in Christian love and in such a manner that God is honored."

"We did not desire simply to do the obvious," Fuller said, "but to exercise some leadership in speaking in advance of the convention. We have said before that removal of politics from the SBC is virtually impossible and inconsistent with the idea of free will and Baptist liberty. What we want to do is remove the bad politics and encourage people to take the high road."

The group also authorized Fuller to "appoint the necessary subcommittees to research and report on various aspects of politics in the Southern Baptist Convention to include voter registration, voter irregularities, the powers of the president, and ongoing political activities in the convention."

He also was authorized to appoint a subcommittee "to consider the effects and advisability of negative designation" in Cooperative Program giving, not only on the national agencies and institutions of the SBC, but on the work of the state Baptist conventions, as well.

The Peace Committee, in the light of controversy which developed over the visit of the subcommittee to Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., authorized Fuller to arrange for another visit to the campus if administrators and others believe such a visit would be helpful.

Dan Martin is BP news editor.

## Students will train at Gulfshore

(Continued from page 3)

sions."

Topics for leadership labs include "Churchmanship," "Worship Leadership," "Publicity/Communications," "Fellowship/Social Chairman," "Evangelism/Campus Outreach," "Working with International Students," "Discipleship Chairmen," "Bible Study," "Leaders of Fine Arts Teams," "Community Missions Chairmen," and "Campus BYW Presidents."

Intensive leadership labs will be offered for BSU presidents, enlistment chairmen, and for missions leaders.

## Cleveland honors two on 35th year

(Continued from page 3)

Convention Board, was guest speaker. The featured soloist was Brenda Breland Sims, of New Orleans, daughter of the Brelands.

In the afternoon reception, presentations were made to the Brelands by Bill Alexander, deacon chairman; Kent Wyatt, Delta State president; Henry Jacob, longtime friend and First Church member; Lac Burrell and Laura Arrington, representing the BSU; and Harry Howarth, representing the church media committee.

# Controversy erupts over peace report

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Controversy erupted over the work of the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee's February meeting.

After Fuller's report on the work of the Peace Committee had been unanimously received by the Executive Committee, Paul Pressler of Houston asked if "all Southern Baptists should have access to the Peace Committee... without fear of intimidation or discipline or anything like that?"

Pressler asked Fuller: "What should one do if he finds out that some individuals are intimidated, threatened with disciplinary action, and generally being attacked... just because they wanted to meet with the Peace Committee?"

Fuller twice said he was "aware of no incident" concerning intimidation or threats. "I do not know of the disciplinary action of which you speak," Fuller told Pressler, but Pressler declined to be more specific, saying once he was "asking general-

ly" and another time he was "asking in a vacuum."

The only controversy which has taken place concerning the visits of Peace Committee subcommittees to SBC agencies occurred at Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., where members of a campus organization, the Conservative Evangelical Fellowship, met with three of the four members of the subcommittee.

Although the meeting has resulted in formal statements from the SEBTS Student Council and a counter statement from the CEF, seminary officials say there has been no official action taken against anyone involved.

One seminary official said the matter was discussed during the President's Forum at Southeastern, during which President Randall Lolley "expressed concern."

"It was a pretty tense meeting, but most of the conversation was between the students. As far as I know that is

(Continued on page 5)

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# Seminary presidents respond to Peace document

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Affirmation mingled with concern characterizes reactions of Southern Baptist Convention seminary presidents to a statement on "theological diversity" drafted by the SBC Peace Committee.

The Peace Committee's statement, approved during the group's meeting Feb. 24-25, says in part, "We have found significant theological diversity within our seminaries reflective of the theological diversity within our wider constituency."

The report was written following visitations by Peace Committee subcommittees to all six Southern Baptist seminaries. It notes examples of diversity "are found among those who claim to hold a high view of Scripture and to teach in accordance with and not contrary to the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963."

Topics about which the statement says teachers hold varying views include the historicity of Adam and Eve, the historical fact of "every event in Scripture," the authorship of biblical books, and the nature of miracles.

Baptist Press contacted presidents of five Southern Baptist theological seminaries — Russell Dilday of Southwestern, Milton Ferguson of Midwestern, Harold Graves of Golden Gate, Roy Honeycutt of Southern, and Landrum Leavell of New Orleans. Randall Lolley of Southeastern was in Alabama for a funeral and could not be reached.

The seminary leaders unanimously expressed support for the work of the Peace Committee. "I applaud the work of the committee," said Leavell. "They have the only viable means of diffusing some of the anger and heat in the denomination."

The presidents also offered positive assessments of the basic assumption of the statement, although some of them expressed reservations about the way in which the report was worded.

"It's true. We do have diversity, not only between seminaries but on the same faculty of a given seminary," noted Harold Graves, president emeritus of Golden Gate, who has been named interim president following the resignation of Franklin Pollard.

Despite their affirmations of the concept of diversity, the seminary presidents expressed some concerns.

"I'm very supportive of the Peace Committee. We had a very good experience with the subcommittee that visited here," Dilday said. "However, I was surprised to see the Peace Committee making reports through the press rather than to the convention of the whole."

Dilday also shared reservations about possible interpretations of the statement. "The impression of the report about diversity is really misleading," he said. "In reading the report, I would get the impression that about half the seminary professors

hold views to the left of center and half to the right.

"That's simply not true," he added. "At our school, there would be a very small amount who would hold to the views described. The statement sounds like there is far greater diversity than we have."

Dilday said he fears the report will do more to raise "concern among our constituency" than it will to "move us toward peace."

Honeycutt related a concern regarding wording which located the diversity "within our seminaries" rather than among faculty members who teach at the seminaries. "Seminaries don't teach; professors teach," he explained. "We need to keep in focus that these are not seminary divergencies, but rather diversity among professors who teach." He stressed that even with diversity, seminary professors have not been accused of teaching contrary to the guiding statements which they have signed.

He also cautioned against locating theological diversity strictly within the seminaries, which were singled out by the Peace Committee document. He explained: "Diversity runs through seminaries, local churches, and other Baptist groups. You cannot divide the convention along lines of diversity and isolate a school, association, or church. It runs through the very fabric of our convention," leaving each church or other unit a pro-

duct of diverse Southern Baptists.

Ferguson said: "The subcommittee, in its published report, focuses on the diversity within our seminaries and indicates that such is 'reflective of the theological diversity within our wider constituency.' . . . Personally, I believe our unity in Christ is much deeper and much more profound than our diversity, as significant as that may be."

Speaking of that unity, Graves, who first became Golden Gate's president in 1952, said: "I've been at this a long time, and I feel there is solid theological education in our seminaries. Our people are orthodox."

"We're like a big circle," said Dilday.

"We have our edges — charismatic, ecumenical, fundamental, dispensational edges. We need those edges; they're windows into other theological worlds. They probe our thinking, keeping us sensitive and aware."

"But when any small minority on the edge attempts to reshape the rest of us — who are in the 'radical middle,' within the main thrust of our Baptist doctrine and heritage — there is trouble. That's why we need bridges of understanding. It is true we have diverse views, but the main body (of Southern Baptists) stays in the giant mainstream where we share common beliefs."

Marv Knox is BP feature editor.

## Controversy erupts over report

(Continued from page 6)

the only thing that happened. I am not aware of any discipline, or intimidation or threats," the official said.

Lolley was not available to respond directly to the allegations.

Although Fuller was unaware of any incident, he did respond by telling Pressler: "If I knew someone was attempting to reach us or talk to us . . . and was being restrained from it, I would say they ought not to be. I would attempt to correct it."

He did say an attempt by an organization within an agency or institution trying to contact the committee "may be of a different variety," but said, "We have said all along that any individual can approach us."

After several minutes of questioning, Pressler asked Fuller: "Isn't the whole purpose of the Peace Committee so that Southern Baptists can express themselves and have an avenue for correction of grievances and we should do that in the context of freedom and no intimidation?"

Fuller responded by noting it is "also our responsibility to keep faith with the assignment we were given; and that is that in our deliberations and approaches, recommendations, and so on, we will honor the trustee structure and the structure of the agencies."

Pressler attempted to introduce a resolution but was ruled out of order by Chairman David Maddox of Fullerton, Calif., who told the Houston appeals court judge he could introduce the action later.

In the miscellaneous business period at the end of the meeting, Pressler introduced a resolution,

which he said was "carefully worded" and "one which all of us can get together on."

The resolution noted the purpose of the Peace Committee "is to discover any causes of discontent that are existent among Southern Baptists," and said "free access" to the committee is necessary if the group is to do its job. It also added it is "necessary for all Southern Baptists to function in an atmosphere of freedom and be able to express themselves without fear of intimidation . . ."

Pressler's resolution said "there have been reports that there have been some efforts by some Southern Baptist agency employees to intimidate ones from appearing before the Peace Committee or discipline those who have expressed their freedom . . ."

It called on the Executive Committee to "affirm the right of all to have free access . . . and . . . advise all employees of the agencies of the SBC that they should allow this free access, and if such is denied to anyone, the trustees of the agency involved should take a proper disciplinary action against the one denying it."

The resolution drew immediate objection. Alvin O. West of Washington, D.C., said he was concerned the resolution was "not specific. I could not vote for a resolution couched in such terms, saying some action had been engaged in by someone, but not knowing who that someone is."

Richard Patton of Portland, Tenn., pointed out that all members of the Executive Committee were "equally elected. I wonder why, if this is a real concern, all of us were not contacted,

rather than just a few."

William Ricketts of Watkinsville, Ga., said "some matters have been brought to my attention by members of the Peace Committee and they disturb me."

The resolution, however, drew the strongest objection from Lloyd Elder, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, who urged the committee to rule the resolution out of order because the Peace Committee is an organization of the Convention and not the Executive Committee.

"I do not appreciate all the questions Mr. Pressler asked earlier, nor the implication of the resolution," Elder said, and referred to a "mysterious cloud" which has been cast over the work of the Peace Committee.

"I plead with you not even to consider the merits, but if you do, I would like to request 20 or 30 minutes to report and summarize (the visit between the BSSB) and four excellent members of the Peace Committee," Elder said.

After Elder's remarks, Frank Ingraham of Nashville, Tenn., moved that the resolution be tabled, and the motion was adopted 36-8.

Dan Martin is Baptist Press news editor.

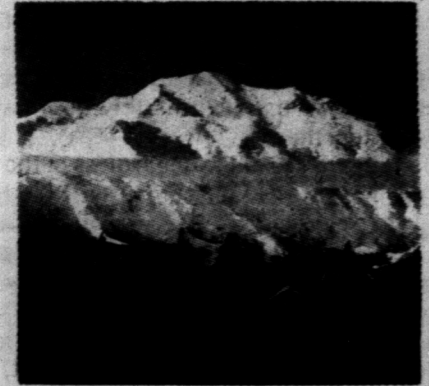
"A careless word may kindle strife;  
A cruel word may wreck a life.  
A bitter word may hate instill;  
A brutal word may smite and kill.  
A gracious word may smooth the way;  
A joyous word may light the day.  
A timely word may lessen stress;  
A loving word may heal and bless."

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**Db AUDIO SERVICES**





# Discipleship: students remember God daily

By Tim Nicholas



"We get so caught up in school work that we sometimes kinda forget about God." So said one college student about one of the reasons she became involved in a discipleship program.

Discipleship programs come in a variety of forms. They could be as regular as the Church Training program in the local church. And they could be as intense as Masterlife, a training program that requires scripture memorization, active witnessing, and attendance at two-hour weekly meetings for up to six months.

Such programs are sweeping the college campuses in Mississippi. Students are becoming involved in varying levels of discipleship training in virtually every Baptist Student Union in the state.

BSU director Keith Cating at Ole Miss asked himself the question, "Are we here to have hot dog suppers and entertain students or are we here to help them grow spiritually?" He adds "Jesus told the disciples to go and make disciples — I think that's what we need to focus on."

Discipleship training is not extra-church, according to BSU directors and the students involved. "We want to train them to be effective church members and leaders," says Susan Puckett, BSU director at Blue Mountain College. For instance, Miss Puckett has a former student, Regina Harlow, leading a group in Masterlife in Quito, Ecuador, as a Southern Baptist missionary Journeyman.

Keith Cating's first Masterlife group

from five years ago includes two who married each other. He's in the Air Force and she's a volunteer BSU director at Boston University and Tufts. They're volunteer youth directors at their church. Another, now married and living in Mobile, is leading a Masterlife group in her church; another is in Jackson leading a Masterlife group in his church. And the fifth, a paralegal in Atlanta, is starting a Bible study in her and her husband's apartment complex.

"Students have so many things that pull at them and try to climb up their priority list. We need the structured discipling process in order to present a balanced Christian life," says Ken Watkins, BSU director at Mississippi State.

Watkins notes that Masterlife offers a sampling of what students need. "The thing I like about Masterlife is that it's very balanced between the various ingredients of Christian living." Those ingredients include Bible study, prayer, fellowship, witness, and ministry.

He realizes, though, that every person who takes a Masterlife course will not become a Masterlife teacher. "A student confronted me and asked 'Is our goal to produce leaders or disciples?' That helped me realize our goal was to produce disciples," says Watkins.

But leaders do come along. Linda Halfacre is vice president of the BSU at Mississippi State and a former BSU summer missionary. Brought up in a Christian home, she accepted Christ

at age 12 and first heard of such a thing as "quiet time" in her youth group. "But I wasn't consistent," she says. Her first semester at State, she took a course called "Survival Kit for New Christians," which older Christians can take also. Then, later she went through Masterlife. "I began trying harder to become more consistent in Bible study, trying to memorize scripture — which is hard for me — taking notes on sermons," she says. When she began her work in discipleship, she recalls wondering if

God would send her to Africa (as a missionary). "Now I think I'd be hurt if he didn't." Along with Watkins, she teaches a Masterlife course.

Discipleship course "grads" are tending to be BSU leaders. "It's only natural the people in Masterlife are the leaders," says Rob Boyd, a BSU intern at Ole Miss from New Orleans Seminary. "Its come down to the obedience part of Christianity — discipleship trains leaders."

Boyd adds, "When you see the life of a student before and after Masterlife, you can see the evidence of God working in his life."

John Sumner, BSU director at Jones County Junior College, was one of the first BSU directors to offer Masterlife to his students. But usually he offers shorter courses since junior college students seldom stay long enough.

He sees more mature students going into senior college since discipleship courses have been offered. "Discipleship helps them have self confidence, makes them capable of accomplishing things with their spiritual growth," says Sumner.

Sumner says that before, he didn't have students taking positions of responsibility in senior colleges. Now, he points to Jerry East and Daniel Hawthorne. East, now a student at Southern Seminary, was state BSU vice president; Hawthorne is former state BSU president. Both attended Jones and took discipleship courses.

Sumner believes discipleship work "is a must. You're just not going to see growth in students. The average student is not going to do this on his own," he says.

State Student Work Department director Jerry Merriman explains that discipleship has become important enough to be separated out as a departmental emphasis along with evangelism, missions, and Bible study. "It's been the thread that has been woven throughout the program," says Merriman.

His department has made finances available to BSU directors who wish-

ed to take Masterlife training "to enable them to serve as equippers for their students."

Nancy Aulds, BSU director at Mississippi University for Women, was one of those who first took Masterlife, is now leading a course for students, another for her church in Columbus, and a "Patterns for Discipleship" course, too.

"I had a hard time discerning the difference between discipleship and Bible study," says Miss Aulds. "Masterlife was good for me. It helped me get a handle personally on the difference — that personal walk with the Lord and taking someone along with you."

She adds, "Masterlife is a way of preparing the students to walk into a ministry in a local church. It helps them discover what their gifts and abilities are." all of her graduates who take discipleship training, she recalls, have gotten involved in their local churches.

A number of BSU directors won't let freshmen take the Masterlife course, recommending, instead, another discipleship training program such as Patterns for Discipleship or, as Ole Miss' Cating offers, a discipleship course jury-rigged from various materials. His "basic discipleship" course requires one hour a week meeting for 10 weeks, memorization of two verses per week and a short Bible study prior to each meeting.

The Masterlife course takes a great deal more time and commitment from students. Ole Miss football player, Kent Austin, when warned that Masterlife would take time, offered, "I'll just take three less hours in school."

Ole Miss law school student Joe Van Dyke explains that he got into Masterlife because "there's a lot more to life than law school." The program "helps you manage time because it helps you put things in a proper perspective," he says. Discipleship "has forced me to get into habits I

(Continued on page 10)

## Discipleship materials are easily obtainable

Southern Baptists in Mississippi have two major sources for discipleship materials, the Church Training program and National Student Ministries.

The student materials range short term Bible studies, to book studies to longer term group efforts. They include "Living Discipleship," by Milt Hughes, which is described as "a 68-page 10-chapter Bible study designed for the beginning phase of discipleship to help new Christians become well grounded in the basics of Christian living." Also available is "Spiritual Journey Notebook," also by Hughes, described as "A guide to personal discipline in Bible study, prayer, depth ministry, reading, listening, journal keeping, decision making, and use of time."

Through the Church Training program, according to Mose Dangerfield, Church Training Department director at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, the primary discipleship materials are the on going age graded periodicals. Each contains "materials designed to provide discipleship training for church members who are interested in grow-

ing and gaining knowledge in the following areas: Christian ethics, Christian theology, Baptist doctrine, church polity, and organization and church history.

Dangerfield describes the MasterLife series (which had two parts in publication and at least one other nearing publication, all written by Avery Willis) as "a sequential discipleship training program for leaders... built around five basic disciplines of the Christian: 1) living in the Word, 2) praying in faith, 3) fellowshiping with believers, 4) witnessing to the world, 5) ministering to others."

There is a youth version called DiscipleYouth and a yearly Baptist Doctrine Study offered each April. The past three years Baptists have studied the doctrines of the Bible, of Christ, and of the laity.

Finally, according to Dangerfield, there are the Equipping Center Modules which can be used by individuals or groups in a study of life-centered issues. All are available on the Materials Service order blank or through the Baptist Book Store.

## What is Discipleship?

Participants offer several definitions of discipleship.

- "Leading people in a direction where they can actually commit their lives to God in all areas and grow in those areas." LEANNE GRIFFIN, Blue Mountain.

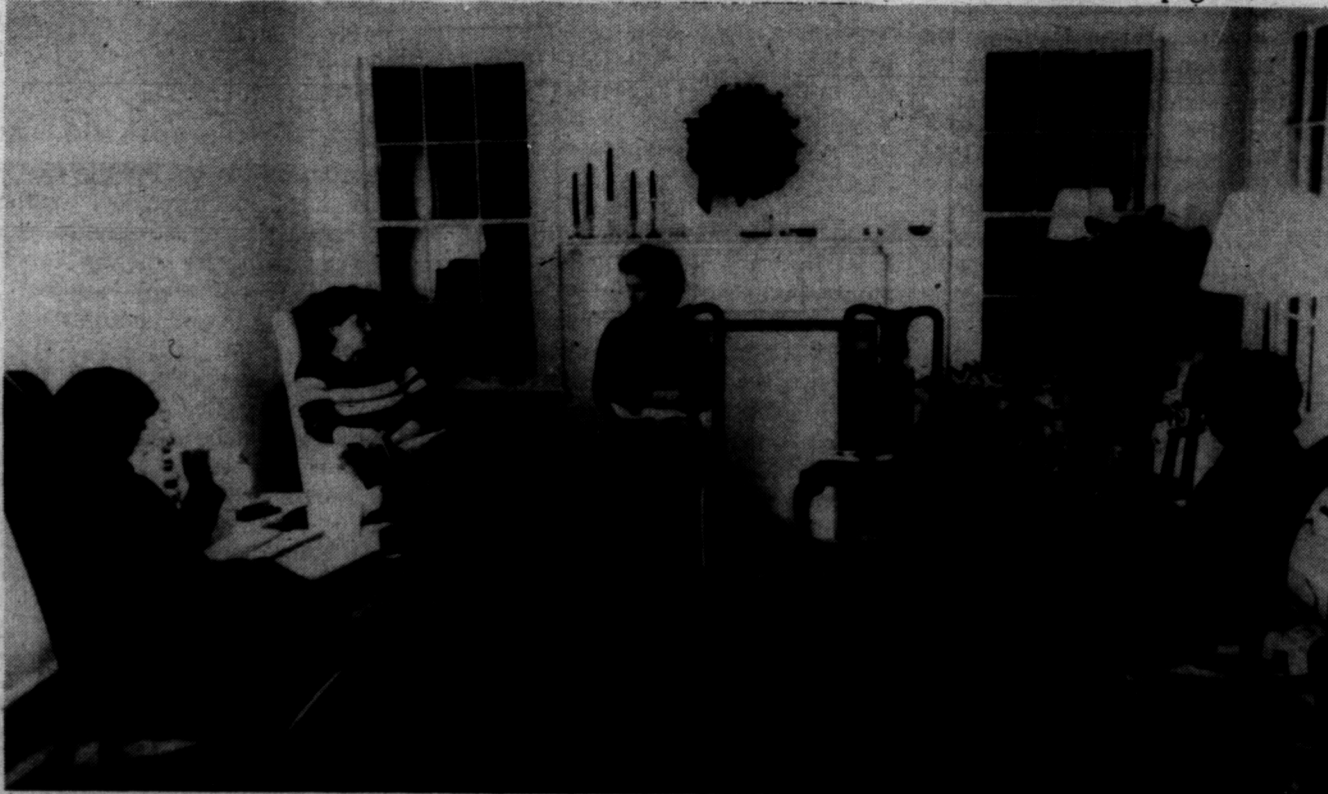
- "The time I spend with Christ, my prayer life, the commitment — strengthening myself on a daily basis." MICHAEL BALL, Mississippi State.

- "To help each person to discover his or her gifts and learn how to use them in the church." KEN WATKINS, BSU director, Mississippi State.

- "You get out what you put into it. It gives you opportunities to be more aware of God and him in your life." DALE AMASON, Mississippi State.

- "It doesn't put you on a super high plane above other Christians, but teaches you humility and how to submit to God, therefore, developing you as a better Christian." BRIAN CUNNINGHAM, Ole Miss.

- "It makes 'Christ master of every area — time, money, relationships...' BOBBIE RICHARDSON, Blue Mountain.



Susan Puckett, center, BSU director at Blue Mountain College, leads a discipleship group in her home.



# Faces And Places

by anne washburn mcwilliams

Thursday, March 13, 1986

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

## Missionary's book used in Thai public school lessons

Maxine Stewart, an Alabamian, is the Foreign Mission Board's press representative for Thai Baptists. Her husband, Bob, a Nebraska native, is, among other things, author of *How to Be a Christian*, best seller among Thai Christian books. They were appointed as missionaries to Thailand in 1958. Though they are stationed at Chacheungsao, she was in Bangkok when I was there in November, and I was fortunate to meet her, not only because she is a warm and lovely person, but also because she is full of information about Thailand and about Baptist mission work there.

In recent years, Thailand's Ministry of Education has placed a new emphasis on presenting the world's major religions to public school students. Though Buddhism is the state religion, Thailand enjoys freedom of religion. As a result, several missionaries and Baptist leaders have presented the essentials of Christianity in public schools. They used Bob Stewart's book as a text.

During April of this year some of the faculty members of the Baptist seminary in Bangkok will be teaching public school teachers how to teach Christianity in the schools.

Maxine told me the story behind her husband's writing this book. She said, "When Bob became the medical evangelist at our mission hospital in Bangkok in 1965, he discovered the doctors were a bit frustrated over the fact that they did not have (what they considered) adequate Christian literature to give the patients and

relatives who were returning home and who would, for the most part, be out of the influence of Christian witness.

"Bob took two weeks of our vacation time and moved (daily) into a Thai house across the street which was rented by our mission as a guest house, and wrote this book (in Thai), hoping it would be useful at the hospital. The book did prove to be useful. It is used by several Christian groups, as well as Baptists. It is in the fifth printing, with 20,000 copies being printed each time.

She continued, "When Charles Heltman came to Calvary Baptist Church, Bangkok, as interim pastor, several Thai people wanted to study English with him. He asked Bob for a copy of this book in English as he wanted to use it for a teaching text and give the students copies of it in Thai. Bob explained there were no English books, but that he had mimeograph copies he had done for some journeymen who wanted to use this book.

"Charles took mimeograph copies, but found them not to be as satisfactory as a book would be, so he was instrumental in getting English translations put into book form, which he used a great deal during his 21 months in Thailand. (He used this in prison ministry with many different nationalities.)"

I have copies of the Thai and English translations, and have already given three copies to Thai friends.

## Education Society of Thailand teaches refugees to read

Since my friend, Rawiwan Thumchai is public relations officer for the Education Society of Thailand, she introduced Joan Peterson and me to the president of the society, Chom Poomipark, and to its vice secretary-general, Sunthorn Kohtbantau. They are associate professors at Srinakharinwirot University, where she has been chairman of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the School of Education for several years. They invited us to lunch and named us honorary members of the society. (I have their gift pin to prove it.)

In a Bangkok restaurant surrounded by a garden (I could see a rabbit outside the window, sitting by a goldfish pond), they explained that the Education Society's philosophy is "Education is the power for development and peace."

President Poomipark, chairman of the Education Technology Department at the university, said he was a graduate of Indiana State and Mr. Kohtbantau said he is a graduate of Oregon State. Hence, both knew something of the work of Baptists in the U.S. and in Thailand, and I showed them a current issue of the Baptist Record.

While we ate, they told us about the Education Society's rural develop-

ment project. (Lunch menu: pork, raw string beans, onions, ginger root, basil leaf, peppers, curry, crisp strips of steak, cucumber slices, papaya with lime juice squeezed over it, fresh pineapple chunks dipped in salt.)

Since Srinakharinwirot is a state university, government projects of helping refugees along the Cambodian border also became university projects. Then Thai villagers who lived near the refugees came to the camps for services like those given the refugees.

Seeing this need among the rural Thai, the Education Society members recruited and trained rural development organizers to lead in development programs among them in education, health and nutrition, agriculture, and economic improvement.

Thumchai and Professor Kohtbantau and others in the society have been active in a literacy program, in the Cambodian refugee camps and also among the Thai villagers. They have been to camps and villages and taught volunteers how to teach reading.

Mr. Poomipark indicated that exchange teachers would be welcomed in Thailand, and at Srinakharinwirot in particular.

## Belzoni anniversary

Editor: Belzoni First Baptist Church will celebrate its 100th birthday Sunday, April 6, 1986.

We have contacted all our living pastors and are now trying to locate descendants of as many of those early pastors as possible. Could you

please include these in your paper?

Joel Baskin	1890-1892
C. L. Anderson	1892-
A. J. Taylor	1892-
E. L. Wesson	1897-1898
J. H. Richardson	1898-1900
L. F. Gregory	1900-1902
W. R. Cooper	1902-1903
R. D. Maum	1903-1905
L. F. Gregory	1905-1907
B. L. Mitchell	1907-1908

W. E. Farr	1908-1910
H. H. Webb	1910-1912
S. G. Cooper	1912-1914

Any information or picture we would be so grateful to get. Should these need to be returned, we will, gladly. We will also refund any postage for picture or material.

Thank you so much.

Mrs. Malcolm Carter  
Rt. 2, Box 219  
Belzoni, MS 39038



Songsak Srikalasin, left, is president of Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok. Semsak Wisalaporn, center, is vice president for international relations. Rawiwan Thumchai, right, is on the faculty of the School of Education.

## Thai university would welcome exchange teachers

The first person who earned a doctorate from Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, was an American, a history teacher, the president of the university told me.

Thumchai introduced me to the president, Songsak Srikalasin, in his office and also to the vice president for international relations, Semsak Wisalaporn, and Joan and I stayed for an interview and a cup of tea.

Established in 1936, the university is a state school and is strongest in the area of education. Its demonstration school covers kindergarten through high school and is a model for training teachers. This university has eight campuses in various places over the country, plus four in Bangkok. In addition to the School of Education, the university includes a faculty of science, of humanities, social sciences, and nursing, and has this year opened a medical school.

Amazingly, the cost is \$40.00 (U.S.

dollars) a year for tuition and \$40.00 a year to live in a dorm. Lunch in the cafeteria costs 50 cents. (Private universities would be more expensive.)

President Srikalasin said that the university would welcome exchange teachers. To me, this seemed to reveal an opportunity for volunteer missions! Would this not be a good chance for exchanging information about culture and religious beliefs?

An article in January Commission by Maxine Stewart told about the first Southern Baptist volunteer mission team in Thailand. Young professionals from Arkansas went to meet some of the educational, professional, political, and business and sports leaders of Thailand and to demonstrate that many Christians have social status and high educational attainments, and thus to give a larger image of the Christian community. Could not such an effort be made by exchange teachers?



Chom Poomipark, center, is president of the Education Society of Thailand. Sunthorn Kohtbantau, right, is vice secretary-general, and Rawiwan Thumchai, left, is public relations officer.

## Drug abuse story

Editor:

I wish to commend you and Mrs. Anne W. McWilliams for the recent article on drug abuse/usage by teenagers. My family's story is the one referred to in the article.

We willingly share with others the help we received — we are spiritually led to do this — II Corinthians 1:3-6. We claim God's promises and know that through all things He is with us — I Peter 5:8-11.

One misquote/correction that must be called to your attention, "... drug abuse is a curable disease." It is not curable — only treatable.

If one person is helped by our sharing, then the sharing has been worthwhile.

Name withheld by request

## Strange collection

Editor:

Don Hocutt's letter in favor of segregation in your March 6 issue was a strange collection of false assumptions, mixed with a few half-truths.

He makes it sound like North America was only settled by Protestants who were fleeing religious persecution and fleeing non-whites. In fact, Maryland was founded by Catholics; Georgia was a haven for those jailed for not paying their debts. If they were fleeing non-whites, why did South Carolina import so many slaves that blacks outnumbered whites two-to-one in the colonial period?

Hocutt's assumptions about South America are offensive. He makes it sound like it was only settled by Catholics who brought no wives but "married freely with non-whites," which caused all of their problems. Yet Argentina has almost no blacks or Indians. To blame their problems on racial intermarriage is incredulous.

He incorrectly assumes that integration is the same thing as racially mixed marriage. But the real issue is whether we will minister, work, and pray alongside all Christian brothers and sisters.

Peter "was to be blamed" when "he withdrew and separated himself" from Gentiles (Galatians 2:11-12). Unfortunately, some people assume the Bible does not mean what it says.

Bob Rogers, pastor  
Calhoun Baptist Church  
Hot Coffee

## Revival Dates

Bluff Springs, Magnolia: Mar. 16-19; Sun., reg. services; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; David Millican, pastor, South McComb, preaching; James Potts, music; Gregg E. Potts, pastor.



## Senior Adult Corner

### Senior adult musical set for Parkway premiere

A new musical written for senior adults, "Meet and Eat, There IS Something More," will be premiered March 25 by the Heavenly Sunlight Singers, the senior adult choir of Parkway Church, Jackson.

The presentation by the 40-voice choir will be preceded by a message by Horace Kerr, who is head of senior adult work for the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. Kerr, a

Mississippian, has served as Executive Director of Mississippi Governor's Council on Aging and as Educational Director of First Baptist Church, Jackson.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. and will be held at Parkway Church.

"Meet and Eat, There IS Something More" was written by two Mississippians, Ann Colbert and Irene Martin both of Forest. The two are partners

in a publishing company, Message Music/Colmar Publishing Company.

The Parkway Church senior adult choir performed by invitation at a senior adult Chautauqua in October at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center in North Carolina. Gayle Garrett is director of the choir.

Bill Causey is pastor of Parkway Baptist Church, and Lew King is minister of music.

### V. L. Alderman, minister, dies

Venton Leroy Alderman, 71, died Feb. 27, at home. Services were held March 1 at Pelahatchie Baptist Church with burial in Rehobeth Cemetery.

Moving from West Lincoln community near Brookhaven, Alderman had been a resident of Pelahatchie for 17 years. He was a Baptist and a member of the Pelahatchie Baptist Church.

Alderman had served pastorates at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, Holmes County; Mount Zion, Leake County; Liberty Church, Scott County; Bear Creek, Attala County; Dixon Church, Neshoba County; and Decedar Church, Jasper County. He retired as pastor at Rehobeth in Rankin County.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Helen Alderman; son, John Alderman of Aransas Pass, Tex.; stepson, Richard Patterson of Gulfport; daughter, Mrs. Judith Ann Nations of Jackson; step-daughter, Mrs. Eileen Allen of Brandon; one brother, two sisters; four grandchildren; and four stepgrandchildren.

### Mrs. J. R. Davis dies in Meridian

Mrs. J. R. Davis, the former Jennie Lou Key, died Feb. 24, at age 78, in Meridian, James Ruffin, pastor of Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian, officiated at the funeral service, held Feb. 26. Mrs. Davis had been married for 56 years to J. R. Davis, retired pastor who served many churches in Mississippi, including First, New Albany, First, Columbia, and First, Batesville. He also served as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and as chairman of its executive committee and as a member of three search committees for the Board's executive secretaries.

Mrs. Davis was born in Dekalb, Miss. She and her husband moved to Meridian when he retired 15 years ago. Survivors include her husband; one daughter, Mrs. Patricia Williams of West Monroe, La.; three grandchildren; two sisters; and one brother.



### Lakeview, Leland, begins deaf ministry

Lakeview Church, Leland announces its new Deaf Ministry. A deaf interpreter will be available for the Sunday morning services. Plans are for eventually forming a special Sunday School class with an interpreter, says Paul Blanchard, pastor. Pictured are Mrs. Vivian Lawler, director of the Deaf Ministry and Blanchard.

## Just for the Record

The Salvation Army is sponsoring David Meece in concert at the Millsaps College Christian Center, Saturday, March 15 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$4 and are available at Christian bookstores including the Baptist Book Store, or at the door.

Bond Church, Wiggins, held a sweetheart banquet on Feb. 14. Each youth was encouraged to bring someone he or she would like to see receive the sweet "heart" of Jesus. The fellowship hall was filled. Lonnie Schrader, a student at Mississippi Southern University, was guest speaker. "Cinderella" was the theme. The tables held silver slippers filled with arrangements of white lace and red roses. A coach was made especially for the royal couple, Clark Byrd, king, and his queen, Sandy Jackson. The couple was chosen by their peers by secret ballot, their identity kept secret until the time of coronation. Qualifications were strict: 1) must be a Christian, 2) a member of the church or attends regularly, 3) faithful, 4) committed to Christ and his church, and 5) dedicated. The royal couple will serve the church throughout the coming year as ambassadors in the field of Christianity.

Bond Church, Wiggins, is remodeling its sanctuary. A new carpet has been installed and new chairs and hymnals have been placed in the choir loft. New furniture has been ordered. John Wade is pastor.

Bond Church, Wiggins, is organizing a Baptist Young Women's group, with an initial enrollment of 15.

A workshop on Nutrition and Cardiovascular Disease is set for March 20 at Mississippi College. The workshop, designed for dietitians and other health related professionals, will deal with hypertension and hyperlipidemias. It is sponsored by the MC Home Economics Department, the school's Division of Continuing Education, and the American Heart Association (Mississippi Affiliate).

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### Mississippi Association plans dedication of office building

Mississippi Association is planning to dedicate its new office building on March 23 at 2:45 p.m., and hold open house. Ray Grissett, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, consultant in associational administration, will be the featured speaker.

"If the weather permits," states John Paul Jones, director of missions, Mississippi Association, "we will be holding 'Open Air' services, and then give everyone time to view the office space. In case of inclement weather, the services will be held in the

auditorium of the Libery Baptist Church."

The building, purchased by the association and reconditioned, is located across the street from the Liberty Church. It contains reception area, literature display area, office for the director of missions, work room, and conference room.

The dedication service will follow the meeting of the association's executive committee, which is set to begin at 2 p.m.

### Greenville singles will host spiritual development conference

"Developing relationships... with one's self, others and God..." will be the theme of the conference to be conducted at First Church, Greenville's Family Life Center, March 21-22. Also "communication" will be a featured topic.

Chris Elkins, minister to single adults at First Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark., will be the speaker. He is a native of Coleman, Tex., and author of *Heavenly Deception* (1980) and *What Do You Say to a Moonie?* having been a former Moonie himself.

Registration (no fee) will be at 6:30 p.m., March 21, followed by a get-acquainted banquet at 7:00 (\$3.00 to cover the cost of the food). Call-in reservations by March 18 are requested at 334-9452.

Saturday sessions will begin at 9 a.m. The conference will conclude at 3 p.m.

Child care (preschool-6th gr.) will be provided by calling to give number and ages.

### Mississippi Baptist activities

March 17-18 WMU Convention; Broadmoor BC, Jackson; 2 p.m., 17th-3:30 p.m., 18th (WMU)

March 21-22 State Handbell Festival-North; FBC, Oxford; 6 p.m., 21st-2:30 p.m., 22nd (CM)

GA Mother/Daughter Weekend; Camp Garaywa; 4 p.m., 21st-1 p.m. 22nd (WMU)

March 21-23 Leadership Training Conference; Gulfshore Assembly; 3 p.m., 21st-11 a.m., 23rd (SW)

March 22 Baptist Men's Conference, Parkway BC, Jackson; 10 a.m.-3 p.m. (BRO)

### Angolan rebels to free Brazilian missionaries

HUAMBO, Angola (BP) — Two Brazilian Baptist missionaries are expected to return to freedom in two weeks after being kidnapped by Angolan rebels on New Year's Eve.

Miriam and Margarida Horvath, who are sisters, were seized Dec. 31 near the city of Huambo in Angola by guerrillas of UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

UNITA has agreed to release the

two women to officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Jean-Jacques Surbeck, a Red Cross delegate to international organizations.

The two nurses were sent to Angola by Igreja Batista de Santo Andre, an independent Baptist church in the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, said Houston Greenhaw, a Southern Baptist missionary in Santo Andre.

Holly Springs, Brookhaven: March 16; 11 a.m.; Talmadge E. Smith, speaker; Roland and Erma Jean Ross, music; lunch served; Glen McInnis, pastor.

A man may be judged by the opinion he has of others.

Nineteenth Avenue Church, Hattiesburg: 35th anniversary, Sunday, March 16; special services will include Sunday School, 9:45; morning worship service, 11:00; dinner on the ground, old fashion afternoon sing; Steven G. Simmons, pastor; Alan E. Cross, minister of music.

### Homecomings





Ron Lewis discusses church growth to religious educators at their annual meeting. A total of 104 persons registered for the meeting which offers seminars to all church staffers in education. — Photos by Billy Hudgens

## Religious educators convene



Ron Lewis, church growth consultant, and Gerald Harris, pastor, Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, were among the featured speakers during the annual Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association meeting on the coast recently.



Pictured are the newly elected officers of the Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association. From left, they are Mackie McCollister, president; minister of education, Harrisburg Church, Tupelo; Keith Wilkinson, president-elect, director, Sunday School Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; Paul Lee, vice president, minister of education, Bowmar Avenue Church, Vicksburg; and Joe Chapman, secretary/treasurer, minister of education, Ridgecrest Church, Jackson.

## Staff Changes

Deborah Thomas is the new minister of music and youth for Ecru Church. She moved there from Drew on March 9.

Glen Newton has resigned the pastorate of Ebenezer Church, Northwest Association.

Danny Bryant is new pastor of Scotland Church, Montgomery County.

Dale Fitts is new pastor of Schoona Chapel Church, Pontotoc County.

## Missionaries on furlough

Missionaries now on furlough in Mississippi:

Jimmy and Susie Hartfield, Mexico, Rt. 8, Box 1474, Hattiesburg; Roger and Beverly Swann, Tanzania, 416 Ford, Columbia; Winfield and Laverne Applewhite, Indonesia, Pine Trails Apts., M-5, Spring Ridge Road, Clinton.

Donald and Rose McCain, Portugal, 500 Linden Circle, Starkville; Ralph and Gena Calcote, Japan, 1625 Easy St., Yazoo City; Bill and Barbara Moseley, Brazil, Pine Trails Townhouse, Apt. E-2, Clinton; Daniel and Sharon Bradley, Kenya, Box 302, Long Beach; Dot Lott, Brazil, 606 Graymont Ave., Hattiesburg.

## Ray Grissett's son dies in wreck

Jerry Ray "Jay" Grissett Jr., 26, of Jackson, died March 7 in Simpson County of an automobile accident. Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. March 9 at Moore Funeral Home, Hattiesburg. He was the son of J. Ray Grissett, consultant in associational administration, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Grissett was a sales representative for Harris Lanier 3M Co., and a member of First Baptist Church of Clinton.

He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Ray Grissett of Hattiesburg; two sisters, Jayne and Michal Grissett, both of Hattiesburg; and maternal grandmother, Mrs. O. R. Saucier, Hattiesburg.

## Resolution honors Galilee member

Galilee First Baptist Church in Gloster, Amite County, on March 5 adopted a resolution of appreciation for Leland Stokes who reached his 80th birthday that day.

Stokes has served as a member of the church since 1940, a deacon since 1946, and Sunday School director for many of those years.

The resolution says that "Sunday School is an integral part of church ministry because Bible teaching is its most prominent goal" and expresses "heartfelt appreciation to Leland Stokes on the occasion of his birthday for a job well done" and "anticipation of many more years of service to God and this church."

Galilee First is in the midst of its 162nd year of service. Randy Rich is pastor.

## Devotional Rebuilding desolate places

By Doyle Cummings

Text: Haggai 1:8

The prophet Haggai issued a challenge to his people when he indicated that the house of God was desolate because each person was concerned only about his own house. Haggai felt God's work was suffering because God's people were neglecting their very purpose for being. It's just as true today, when God's people neglect God's work, that work will be desolate. One reason God's work lies desolate in individual lives, and in churches, is a lack of commitment.

Lack of commitment may result in indifference. The people of Haggai's time never said, "We are not interested in God's work." They just said, "Now is not the time." Most church members would admit they should be more involved in God's work. They would like to see the church grow, but they are not willing to get involved. God's work goes undone so far as that person is concerned.

Lack of commitment may be caused by discouragement. Haggai's people began with great enthusiasm. The work had hardly started, however, when several discouraging problems were encountered. The people gave up and quit. The house of God lay desolate while the people spent time and money making themselves more comfortable. Sound familiar? We also begin with great excitement, willing to do anything for the Lord. Then those inevitable disappointments come. Failing to see the progress we desire, we become more cautious, not willing to stick our necks out for the Lord. After a few setbacks, many drop out of the race, while the rest just plod along. The work falters while the people turn to their own interests. The work of God lies desolate.

Selfishness may crowd our commitment. We don't plan to be selfish. The devil just gives us a taste of it, and from there on it is difficult to resist. Time for God gets side-tracked. God's work is not being put down permanently; it is just being laid aside for a rest. But, we begin liking our time for self so much, we aren't willing to give it back to God, and God's work lies desolate!

We need to know that God's work is the most important thing we will ever do. The words of Haggai need to be heard again today!

Doyle Cummings is pastor, First, Itta Bena.



Cummings

## Leslie Jarvis listed in "Top teens"

Leslie Jarvis, a member of the High School Acteens at Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, has been selected as one of Accent's Top Teens. This honor is given in order to recognize outstanding Acteens in churches of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Leslie will be featured, along with other Top Teens, in a special section of an upcoming issue of Accent Magazine, the magazine for Acteens in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Sandy Fields, high school Acteens leader at Harrisburg, stated that she is proud of Leslie and all the other girls in the Acteens who are involved in several ministries, including a Big A Club at an apartment complex in Tupelo on a weekly basis, a special ministry to senior adults on a monthly basis, and the second annual trip to inner city Houston, Texas to work in mission Vacation Bible Schools.

## Revival Results

Bond Church, Wiggins: youth revival; Jan. 31-Feb. 2; concert Jan. 29 by Vaughn Thacker; preaching Fri.-Sun. by Danny Lanier; music led by Alan Black; Sunday evening concert by "Life," Christian music group; "many souls saved and many lives rededicated during the five days"; 13 baptisms in three weeks following the revival; Church Training average attendance increasing from 15 to 64 since revival; John Wade, pastor.

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# Changes are proposed in bylaws of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union

Listed below are proposed changes, as recommended by the state Woman's Missionary Union Executive Board, to be made at the WMU annual meeting, March 17-18.

## Article III — Relationships

New Bylaws — add: Section 1. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Baptist Convention Board policies.

Section 1 of old Bylaws becomes Section 2; Section 2 becomes Section 3; Section 3 becomes Section 4 of new Bylaws.

## Article VIII — The Executive Board

Old Bylaws — Section 4. The Executive Board shall nominate all executive and professional personnel on the staff of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union to be elected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

New Bylaws — Section 4. The Executive Board shall nominate all executive and professional personnel on the staff of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union consistent with Executive Board and Mississippi Baptist Convention Board policies with election by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Old Bylaws — Section 5. The Executive Board shall perform its tasks through committees appointed by the president.

New Bylaws — Section 5. The Executive Board shall perform its tasks through committees appointed by the president in consultation with the executive director-treasurer.

Old Bylaws — Section 6. The Executive Board shall be responsible for formulating board policies for integrating the work of the committees of the Board and of the professional staff.

New Bylaws — Section 6. The Executive Board shall be responsible for formulating board policies for integrating the work of the committees of the Board and of the executive and professional staff.

Old Bylaws — Section 7. The Executive Board shall hold and administer all property and funds on behalf of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, and shall have the power of trustees in business matters, such as acquiring and conveying property.

New Bylaws — Section 7. The Executive Board shall hold and administer all property on behalf of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, and shall have the power of trustees in business matters, such as acquiring and conveying property.

Add: Section 8. The Executive Board shall administer the Edwina Robinson Special Day Offering, Camp Garaywa fees, and WMU's allocation of the State Mission Offering.

Section 8 of old Bylaws becomes Section 9 of new Bylaws.

## Article IX — Committees

Old Bylaws — Section 2. Committees, standing or special, except those herein provided, shall be appointed by the president as authorized by Woman's Missionary Union, or the Executive Board.

New Bylaws — Section 2. Committees, standing or special, except those herein provided, shall be appointed by the president as authorized by Woman's Missionary Union or the Executive Board in consultation with the executive director-treasurer.

# Discipleship: students remember God daily

(Continued from page 6)

wanted to get into but probably would have put aside otherwise."

One of the Bible studies in the second portion of Masterlife, concerns the dimensions of discipleship. from II Tim. 2, the students develop a checklist for discipleship.

After the Bible study, the Masterlife group at Blue Mountain has a time of prayer. One says she is much in debt, another is leading a home mission study in her church and has never done such before. Then the girls discuss discipleship. "I can quote more memory verses," says Dana Inman. "Having more patience and feeling closer to the Lord has come out of it," says Bobbie Richardson. "I can pray knowing if God's going to answer prayer and when he's not," says Mindy Pardue.

A group at State had been practicing witnessing to fellow students who played the parts of "seeker," "self-satisfied," and "skeptical." Afterward, they report "sweaty palms" about witnessing and "anxiety about how to

get into it." Also, one says, "it seems like God was providing you with something to say."

About the Masterlife course itself, Dale Amason says "I don't think I could have gotten through last semester without it... it helped me rediscover the Lord." Jenna Sewell says that "it won't end when I graduate. It's become a daily routine."

In one school where Masterlife is taught, the group reached a session where they talked about righting wrong relationships. A student had repressed something out of childhood that the session brought to the fore. The group offered warm support. The BSU director reports that the student along with that student's family ended up in professional counseling.

Later the student said of the Masterlife group, "if I had not been in Masterlife when this surfaced I would not have been able to make it. Without the love and support of the group, I might have taken another alternative — such as suicide."

Discipleship is going on in local churches and on Mississippi's college campuses. Christian students are learning about a mature walk with God. State's Watkins explains that the student doesn't have to actually take a discipleship course, but a course helps clarify the commitment.

Actually, says Watkins, "anywhere students are challenging each other, encouraging each other in the Christian walk, and ministering — then discipleship is taking place."

# Carey thanks benefactors

William Carey College honored and thanked its benefactors during homecoming festivities recently for their more than \$1 million in contributions.

J. Ralph Noonkester, in his 30th year as president of the college, thanked seven groups and 11 individuals at an appreciation dinner on the Hattiesburg campus Feb. 14.

Thirty years of growth, 1956-86, for the college were celebrated by the 200 people attending the dinner. Honorees included the City of Hattiesburg, represented by Mayor G. D. Williamson, and the University of Southern Mississippi.

Other benefactors recognized were the Mississippi Baptist Convention, the cities of Gulfport and Biloxi, the Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans, and First Mississippi Corporation Foundation.

Individuals recognized were Wiley Fairchild, Rodney Fairchild, Miss Sarah Gillespie, Dr. and Mrs. E. W. Green, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Pope, Mr. and Mrs. Dumas Smith, Mr. and Mrs. John D. Thomas, R. S. (Dick) Thomson, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Walters, and the late Mr. and Mrs. Alvin H. Bell and Mr. and Mrs. D. R. Sanderson.

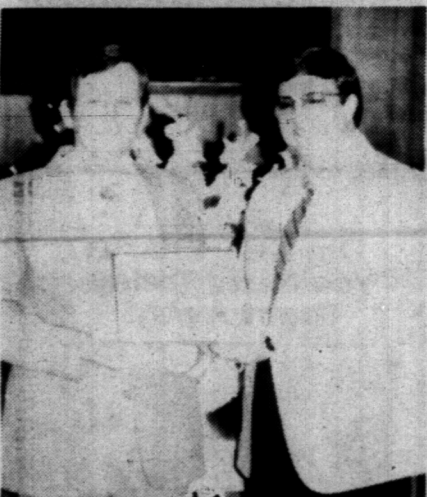
# 1st, Macon, plans Bible conference

First Church, Macon, will hold spring Bible conference March 16-19. Thomas D. Lea, professor, Southwestern Seminary, will lead in a study on Hebrews. Conference times: Sun., regular times; Mon. and Tues., 7-8:30 p.m.; Wed., 7:30 p.m. Tommy Jarrett is pastor.

# Revival Dates

Wiggins, Carthage: March 16-19; 10:45 a.m.; 7:00 p.m.; Truman Scarborough, pastor of East Philadelphia Church, Philadelphia, evangelist; Carlton Jones, pastor.

# Names in the News



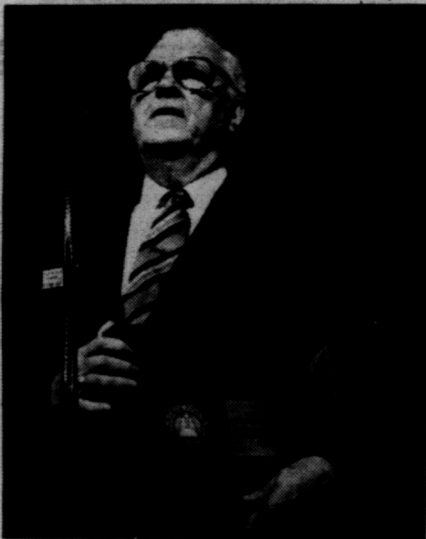
John E. Howard, youth minister, Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, is a writer for Baptist Youth, April 1986. "Lord of My Family" is the title of unit three in Baptist Youth, a youth Church Training study magazine for ages 13-17. Baptist Youth is designed to be used by churches in which a wide age group is represented.

Tommy Miller was recently licensed to the gospel ministry by First Church, Lauderdale. He is now taking classes at Clarke College in Newton. Miller can be reached for pulpit supply through First Church, Lauderdale, 679-5586. Pictured are Mike Russell (left) pastor, and Miller (right).



New Hope Church, Columbus, recently ordained Billy Abrams to the gospel ministry. Abrams has been called as associate pastor to New Hope Church. Victor Bonner Jr. is pastor. Pictured (l to r) are Billy Abrams, Mrs. Abrams, and Victor Bonner, pastor.

First Church, Meridian, ordained Kevin Griffin on Sunday, March 2. Beverly Tinnin is pastor.



Tom O. Winstead (left), from Clinton, a trustee of the Sunday School Board until his term expires in June, recently received a plaque of appreciation from Board President Lloyd Elder.

Richard Lee Davis, associate minister and administrator of Hattiesburg's Temple Church, was ordained in a service at Temple on March 2. Native of Georgia, he has been at Temple since 1978. He is a graduate of William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Nan, have two children.



Prentiss Church, Prentiss, held an Acteens recognition service with the theme, "Multiply the Vision." Pictured are (left to right) Linda Little, Jan Price, Holly Berzenhafer, Melissa Richmond, and Renee Berry. Not pictured is Karen Pace. Linda, Jan, and Holly were also recognized for completing 13 years in the missions organizations.

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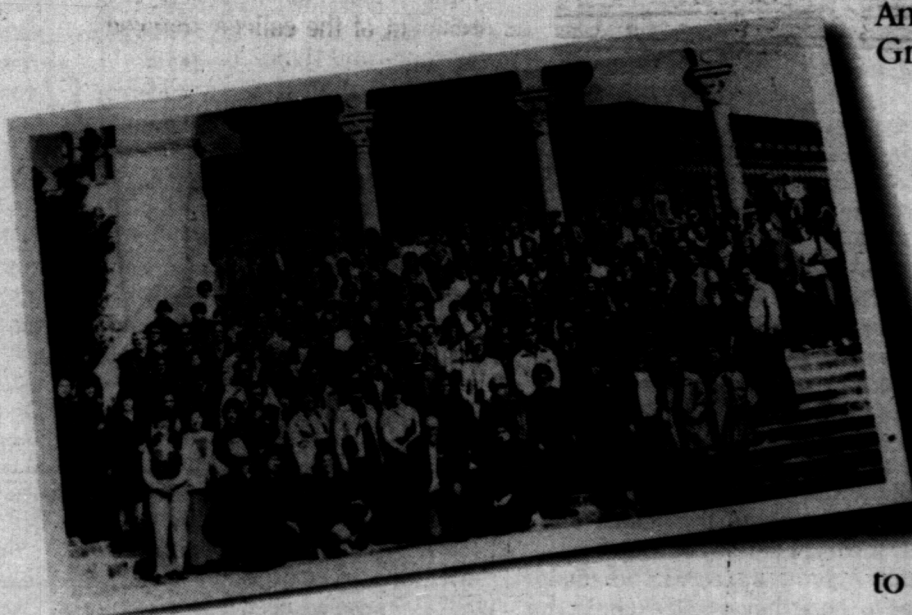
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# A short sermon on travel to Israel from some ministers who just returned.



On December 26, a group of 160 Americans, led by Rev. Robert Gordon Grant, left on a tour of Israel.

How did they find their trip?  
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"The most delightful, educational and inspiring trip I have ever made," says Rev. Leonard Nipper.

"Very refreshing and uplifting," adds Rev. James McHaffie.

In fact, every member of this pilgrimage tour came away with much the same warm feelings.

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To which we can only say, Amen.

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# Baptist Record

- Life and Work: *Hope from the Supper*
- Bible Book: *The need for qualified leaders*
- Uniform: *A hope worth waiting for*

## Hope worth waiting for

By Gus Merritt  
2 Peter 3:1-13

Several years ago, some other ministers and I were going to a seminar in a nearby town. As we traveled, the subject of the return of Christ was discussed. One of the ministers of another denomination expressed his belief that the second coming of Christ was when he came to live in the heart of the believer. This was a great opportunity for me to explain that Jesus' return would be a bodily and visible return as taught by the scriptures. Jesus' return will not be a symbolic return but an actual return where he will be with us in his resurrected body.

How disappointing it would be for Christians to face the many problems and heartaches of this life without the hope of his coming. This hope has

been a sustaining hope for all believers through the ages. The early Christians greeted one another as they traveled with the salute and word, "Maranatha," meaning, "O Lord, come!"

The doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ is one of the clearest and most emphasized doctrines in the New Testament. Jesus emphasized his return on several occasions as he taught his disciples.

Since the ascension of Jesus, there have been skeptics and scoffers concerning the promise of Jesus' return. Peter warns us concerning these false teachers in his second epistle. Consider the arguments of these scoffers. The first argument the scoffers give is that all things continue as they always have. Therefore, things will continue in the future as they have in

the past. This argument allows for no divine intervention or divine judgement. This view is held by the evolutionists today. Carl Sagan makes a similar statement as he begins the program "Cosmos" on educational television (vs. 4). These scoffers are peculiar to the "last days," that period of time beginning with the first coming of Jesus and ending with his second coming. These scoffers pursue their own evil desires (vs. 3). The sinner does not want to acknowledge a time of judgement and seeks to explain it away.

The second argument offered by the scoffers is implied in Peter's answer to them in verse 9. They argued that God had not acted in judgement in the past, therefore, he would not act in the future. Peter calls this "willful ignorance." The scoffers closed their minds to the truth of recorded history. Peter warns the Christians not to be guilty of the same "willful ignorance"

(vs. 8). Just because the second coming of Christ has been delayed does not mean the Lord is "slack" or "tardy" concerning his promise. The Lord is not powerless to fulfill this promise. The delay is not according to man's timetable but God's (vs. 8). The reason for the delay is God's "long suffering" or patience with us. He is not willing that any should perish, though some will, but that all should repent (vs. 9). Those who perish will do so because they have refused to repent and accept Christ as savior.

The catastrophic judgement of God will come unexpectedly as a "thief in the night" (vs. 10). The phrase "day of the Lord," is the final judgement of God and the consummation of all things. Water and fire connected with the word of God are the purifying elements used in judgement. The flood in Noah's day and fire in the "day of the Lord" will purge the earth of the works of man.

Since God's answer to the scoffers is sudden and catastrophic judgement, Peter urges the Christians to let this motivate them to holy living (vs. 11). This should create in the Christian a reverential awe and a desire to please God with holy living. It should also create in the Christian a desire to witness to those who are not believers so they may escape the judgement of God.

The Christians may even hasten the coming of Christ by living in such a way as this. As Christ's purpose for us is implemented, the time for waiting can be shortened (vs. 12). After the Lord comes and the earth is purged with fire, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Not new in reference to time but condition. Absolute righteousness will prevail. Finally, we will be delivered from the presence of sin!

Gus Merritt is pastor, Clarke Venable, Decatur.

## Qualified leaders

By Billy McKay  
Titus 1:1-16

**Introduction.** Titus and I and II Timothy are called "pastoral epistles" because they were addressed to pastors. Timothy and Titus were young pastors who were Paul's "preacher boys." These three letters deal with the need for organizational structure in the local church. The structure of such letters is generally as follows: correct teaching leads to correct organization which leads to correct living.

(1) **The penman.** The writer of Titus was Paul. We learn this from the signature of the writer (1:1). The status of the writer is two-fold: "servant of God" and "apostle of Jesus Christ." The word "servant" in no way is to be thought of as demeaning for a Christian. An old Latin phrase was that "to be his slave is to be a king." The spiritual leaders in the Old Testa-

ment regularly referred to themselves as the servants of God (cf. Josh. 1:2; Jud. 2:8; Psa. 78:70; 89:3, 20; Amos 3:7; Jer. 7:25). This was indeed a title of honor. An apostle (1:1) was like a five-star general or an admiral. Apostles were the highest ranking officials in the early church. They had seen Christ in his resurrection (cf. I Cor. 9:1), and received their message from him (Gal. 1:11-12). The service of the writer is two-fold: (a) the salvation of God's people which is expressed in the term "the faith of God's elect" (1:1a) and the sanctification of God's people which is expressed in the term "the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness" (1:1b). This will result in giving the believers the "hope (certainty) of eternal life."

(2) **The period.** It is generally thought that Titus was written between Paul's first and second imprisonments and the date would be

approximately 63-66.

(3) **The person.** This letter is addressed to Titus who was a Gentile convert (cf. Gal. 2:3). He served on Paul's evangelistic team as his "trouble shooter." Three times he was sent by Paul to work out problems in various churches, i.e., Corinth, Dalmatia (Yugoslavia) and Crete (cf. 2 Cor. 7:6-7; 8:6, 16-24; 2 Tim. 4:10; Tit. 1:5). Paul sent Titus to "set in order" (i.e., "straighten out") the organization of the Cretan churches which was unfinished due to the brief visit of Paul there (1:7-8). Things were so bad in Crete that apparently Titus wanted to leave (1:5). The bad situation is summarized in one blistering verse: "One of themselves," says Paul, "a prophet of their own, said Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons. This testimony is true" (1:12). Titus stayed in Crete and the results were excellent. There is a two-fold application here. First, life is often a matter of making the best of a bad situation. Secondly, we can change any situation by changing our attitude toward it. In

Crete, archeological excavations have unearthed the foundations of stately churches with the name of Saint Titus on them! Titus was a great pastor and "trouble shooter." Crete made Titus a saint; and Titus made Crete a powerful center of Christian influence. Tradition says Titus spent his last years there.

(4) **The purpose.** The purpose is stated in 1:5 which is to urge Titus to complete the organization of the work in Crete and to ordain elders. These elders were to teach sound doctrine (1:9) and guard the flock against false prophets (1:10).

**I. We need leaders who are qualified in their personal walk (1:6-9).**

A. With reference to their natural family (1:6). I Tim. 3:1-7 is a repeated list of qualifications of the elder. The point of 1:6 is that Christianity begins at home. No amount of church service can atone for our neglect of making Christ prominent in the home. Paul is not saying that there will not be problems. He is saying they must be dealt with according to the word of God.

B. With reference to their spiritual family (1:7-9). First, his character before the church is to be above reproach (1:7-8). His character is described negatively in 1:7 and positively in 1:8. Second, he must be a reliable teacher of the word of God.

II. We need leaders who are qualified in their pastoral work.

A. To identify the belief of false teachers (1:10-12): True teaching is based on the principle of God's grace. False teaching is based on a works system for salvation. Grace is the absence of works. Therefore, any works added to grace destroys the principle of God's grace.

B. To identify the behavior of false teachers (1:13-16). Their inward life is described in 1:13-15. Their outward life is described in 1:16. This outward corruption was an outgrowth of their moral deficiency. The good news is that even the sorry Cretians are worth saving (cf. 1:13)! **Conclusion:** Qualified leaders will always get God's work done.

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## Hope from the Supper

By Peter McLeod  
Matthew 26:1-35

In preparing this lesson, I recalled a sermon by my good friend, Richard Groves, pastor of the Wake Forest Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C. With his permission, I have drawn from his thoughts.

Has it ever struck you as odd, or at least interesting, that the pivotal historical events in both the Old and New Testaments were commemorated by corporate meals? The exodus is remembered by the Passover, while the death and resurrection of Jesus is remembered by what we commonly term the Lord's Supper. Why? What is there about participation in a meal that makes it such an ideal way to celebrate special occasions? What is it we especially need to understand about eating in community before we partake of a meal like the Lord's Supper? I believe Jesus provides special insight into the significance of corporate dining in our scripture passage today.

(1) **Eating together implies some degree of personal acceptance of the one who eats with you.** Look at those who sat around that last supper table with the Master. They came from every walk of life and their seating arrangements did not place one over or against the other status-wise.

Contrast that with experiences out of our history where the servants' quarters were either removed from those of the family, located in the attics or attached through a main central building. One such home in Florida even has an arrangement wherein the servants' wing has steps leading "up" to that of the family area — a symbolism not lost on the astute observer.

And yet at Jesus' table, as seen in Matthew 26, there were no "steps" leading up or down. They were all on the same level, an affirmation of acceptance.

(2) **Eating together also implies social approval and acceptance.** No wonder the Pharisees were enraged

when they saw Jesus eating with well-known sinners and publicans. They knew the implications of what he was doing — giving approval and acceptance to those they would exclude, the "despicable of life." Strangely, they were right! That is exactly what Jesus was saying by his actions; that God approves of and accepts all men, even those unacceptable to other men. The message of Jesus — and the church — is that we have all been accepted just as we are by the same Father.

(3) **Eating together creates fellowship.** Compare if you will in your mind those meals you've eaten with your family around a table and those you've "inhaled" around a TV set. What is missing from the latter? A sense of community, a sense of fellowship. When we sit at a table, we face one another, we share, we experience togetherness. Think of the strength and the joy we draw from those times! Picture Jesus as he watches Judas walk away and says to his disciples, "He ate with us!" Jesus recognized that Judas had not only betrayed his friendship, he had also violated the sense of fellowship and communion at the Master's table.

(4) **Eating together also welds us**

together as the people of God. Paul said that when we partake of the Lord's Supper, we are doing so in remembrance of him. (I Cor. 11:24). Why? Because we need to be constantly reminded and assured that he will come again. The apostle also tells us that it should be part of our worship experience.

That is not to say there is no place for private communion, but we need to remember that when we eat at the Lord's table, we are celebrating the two events which made our salvation possible, both as individuals and as a collective entity — the Body of Christ. It is that body, born out of widely divergent groups of people that lives in celebration. That's why Paul stresses that we sit at the Lord's table together. To do so alone means we miss the larger scope of what Christ has done for us all. He has saved our souls, he has salvaged our lives and we live daily by the power of his Spirit in us.

When you next observe the Lord's Supper, why not focus on the person next to you? As you share the bread, say, "This is our Lord's body which was broken for us!" Likewise with the cup, "This is our Lord's blood which

was shed for us. This we do in remembrance of him until he comes again."

For that is our hope, that is our celebration — he is coming again!

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March 13, 1986